

West Chester, PA—Last evening, Congressman Joe Sestak (D-PA) spoke at the Chester Pike Rotary Club in West Chester about the work he has done in Congress and answered their questions from constituents. As Vice Chairman of the House Small Business Committee also emphasized the importance of small business in the region, and discussed the state of our economy. — “I believe we must reduce the financial strains felt by millions of American families, while continuing long-term efforts to strengthen our economy,” said Congressman Sestak. “I am dedicated to creating and supporting policies which balance short term investment with long term fiscal responsibility – a policy that ensures that not only our generation enjoys the fruits of a robust economy, but that the next generation is not burdened by a devastating debt.”

Congressman Sestak recently voted for the Economic Stimulus Package, which was signed into law February 7, 2008. This Package will provide temporary, targeted, and timely relief to the American people at a time when they need it the most. This Package will provide tax rebates to “jumpstart” our economy, provide a temporary enhanced small business expensing, and increase loan limits for Fannie Mae and Freddy Mac.

“As the Vice Chair of the Small Business Committee, I value and encourage this legislation that helps our small businesses in our economy – especially in a recession, when they are most at stake, said Congressman Sestak. “I believe this package would promote near-term small business investment in equipment, which will spur job creation and protect jobs that already exist here at home.”

Congressman Sestak also spoke of the need to expand opportunities for small businesses to access federal contracts.

“American small businesses bring innovation, creativity, competition and lower costs to the federal table. When these businesses are excluded from federal opportunities through contract bundling, our agencies, small businesses, and the taxpayers lose,” added Congressman Sestak. “Fairer access for small businesses will lead to lower prices and the improvement of the quality of goods and services procured by the federal government, bringing greater returns for taxpayer dollars.”

Congressman Sestak has taken steps to help improve federal contracting opportunities for small businesses. He passed a House Amendment to the Small Business Fairness in Contracting Act requiring that large contracts are to be unbundled to open the bidding process to small businesses. This means that multi-million dollar contracts that previously would have only been available to large companies and corporations are now opened for bidding to small and medium sized businesses.

In addition, in the Defense Authorization bill that was passed on House floor, Congressman Sestak inserted an amendment that mandated that a contract officer must certify that they have done market research, including by using a web browser, to see if small businesses qualify for any contract over \$1million. This is important because 23% of all federal contracts are to be given to small businesses, but currently only 6.7% are given to small businesses in the Seventh District.

During his remarks, the Congressman also focused on our national security, the Protect America Act, and Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) which have currently taken main stage in Congress. “I am deeply committed to increasing our national security and utilizing any

tools we have to protect our homeland and our engagements abroad,” said Congressman Sestak. “However, as a Congressman, one of my sworn oaths is to uphold and protect the Constitution of the United States – a model of liberty and a beacon of freedom. We must improve our intelligence gathering capabilities while safeguarding the liberties that make this nation admired all over the world.”

Congressman Sestak expressed appreciation to the wonderful work of the Chester Pike Rotary Club, and of the International Rotary community. “The goals and work of the Rotary Club are those that I aspire to reach in Congress – to provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards, and help build goodwill and tolerance in our community. Through the work of Congress and communities around our nation we can make these ideals a possibility.”

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the US Congress.